

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
THE CHIEF OF MILITARY HISTORY AND THE CENTER OF  
MILITARY HISTORY  
WASHINGTON, DC 20374-5088

17 January 1992

REPLY TO

ATTENTION OF:

Operational History Branch

Dr. Lydia Fisch  
Department of Anthropology  
Buffalo State College  
1300 Elmwood Avenue  
Buffalo, New York 14222

Dear Lydia:

Enclosed you will find the words of some traditional songs, according to an Army nurse, Lt. Col. Mary Frank (soon to be promoted to full colonel), that were sung at hospitals in the Saigon area during the war. Sorry for the delay, but being a pack rat, nothing is easy to find!

Enjoyed meeting at the Air and Space Museum's conference, 10 January, and wish you the best on your Vietnam Veterans Oral History and Folklore Project.

Sincerely,



George L. MacCurdy  
Military Historian

**SONGS OF SAIGON**

(Songs that Pacify)

**Second Edition**

Recommendations for Additions Greatly Appreciated

TWB

## AREEVADERCHE SAIGON

Areevaderche, Saigon

We hope you win your war

I'm looking for a job in Bangkok,

I'm looking for a job in Hong Kong,

I'm looking for a sinecure in Singapore.

The Viet Cong steal our weapons.

The Viet Cong hold them tight.

Now they're raiding our strategic hamlets

Now they're raiding our strategic hamlets

Wonder where the Bao An and the Dan Ve are tonight.

The Bao An steal our chickens

The Dan Ve steal our rice

And the Hamlet Chief is selling bulgar

With the GVN acting so vulgar

Is it any wonder that the VC seem so nice.

Where are the Special Forces

They're not on our frontier

They are beating up the nuns and bonzes

They are beating up the nuns and bonzes

That's the reason for the shooting that you can hear!

They send us lost of Colonels

With chickens on their necks

They are working in coordination

They are working in coordination

They are making plans to win the war on top of the Rex.

Areevaderche, Saigon

We hope you win your war

I'm looking for a job in Bangkok,

I'm looking for a job in Hong Kong,

I'm looking for a sinecure in Singapore.

## THE LONGEST YEAR

There are boys of Special Forces  
There are lads from USOM too  
And the guys who fly the choppers -  
And of course there's me and you.

Refrain: . . .      The longest year, the longest year  
                          You know damn well was spent right here,  
                          The longest year, the longest time  
                          That I have ever spent!

It's gone on a whole log longer  
Than we thought in '62  
We'd be home a whole lot sooner  
If it weren't for Madame Nhu.

Refrain: . . .

We were working in liaison,  
Told them everything we do,  
and they put in in the papers  
Said that we had planned a coup.

Refrain: . . .

If they weren't out burning Buddhists  
Or scaling pagoda walls  
They were finding ways to cheat us  
'Cause the load we had to haul

Refrain: . . .

If you ever come to Saigon,  
Follow my instructions, kid -  
Buy a ticket on to Bangkok,  
You'll be very glad to did!

Refrain: . . .      The longest year, the longest year  
                          Was spent in Viet Nam right here  
                          The longest year, the longest time  
                          That I have ever spent!

## WE ARE WINNING

(Tune: Rock of Ages)

We are winning, this we know  
General Harkins tells us so.  
Though in the Delta things are tough  
And in the highlands very rough,  
But the VC soon will go,  
Mr. Cabot tells us so.  
If you doubt them, who are you  
McNamara says so too.

(Tune: Landlord Fill the Flowing Bowl)

Landlord fill that nuoc mam bowl  
And splash it on my dishee  
Landlord fill that nuoc mam bowl  
And splash it on my dishee  
For tonight we'll dysentary be  
For tonight we'll dysentary be  
For tonight we'll dysentary be  
Tomorrow we'll smell fishy.

(Tune: Sioux City Sue)

I meet a gal in old Saigon  
I asked her what was new  
She said I think this morning  
They held another coup  
I dont know who they couped this time  
I surely don't know why  
The only thing I know for sure  
We had a little coup!

## GHOST ADVISORS BY AND BY (Pre-Coup)

Some Yanks went out advising  
Down in Southern Vietnam,  
But the people they advised  
Didn't give a good Goddam  
The president and his family  
Were sweating out a coup.  
And they blamed the whole "Schamozzle"  
On the likes of me and you!

-- 1st Chorus --

Yipee aye yea! Yipee aye yea!  
Ghost advisors by and by!

Some Buddhists did a "slow burn"  
In Hue and in Saigon,  
And you couldn't "watch the birdies."  
Without dodging plastic bombs.  
The students, they got angry ---  
The government closed the schools  
And the "Times of Vietnam"  
Called the U.S. a bunch of fools!

-- Chorus --

These advisors were notorious  
For countering insurgency.  
They collected "Lessons Learned"  
For the Chief of "QUO VAN MY."  
They gathered tons of data,  
From the field in Vietnam  
(But down in Venezuela,  
It won't be worth a damn!).

-- Chorus --

They worked for COMUSMACV  
And for the Chief of MAAG,  
Who told Bob McNamara  
That the war was "in the bag."  
That the Viet Cong were beaten  
In this brave "Diem-ocracy"  
(They didn't tell the insurgents:  
The omnipotent VCs!).

-- Chorus --

Yes, in the steaming jungles  
And the plains of mud and rice,  
Infested with mosquitoes,  
Viet Cong and body lice,  
There went the good advisors  
And some "Greenie Beanies" too,  
To save the little country  
For the likes of Madame NHU!

-- Chorus --

They advised the Civil Guard  
And the valiant SDC  
They advised the Vietnamese  
In the land, air and sea  
And when the fights were over  
When the "body-count" was in  
Our side had lost a hundred  
And the VC only ten!

-- Chorus --

They built Strategic Hamlets  
And they dispensed USOM aid.  
They convinced the Montagnards  
That they really had it made!  
They defoliated jungles,  
And herbicided rice,  
As long as the Ambassador  
Could afford the going price!

-- Chorus --

Then they headed for the airfield,  
Out at good old TAN SON NHUT;  
With boarding passes in their hands  
And CIBs to boot!  
"Little soldiers of misfortune."  
And, "Tools of the CIA."  
They waited for jet planes  
To touch that broad runway!

-- Chorus --

Now buddy, listen to them  
And hear what they will say  
They're gonna board that aircraft  
So don't get in their way  
They'll "ZAP" you with their cross-bows  
And their home-made rifles too  
Cause no seats exist on that craft  
For the likes of me and you.

-- Final Chorus --

Yipee-aye-yeah! Yipee-aye-yeah!  
Ghost advisors by and by!

### GHOST ADVISORS

(Embassy's cleaned-up version)

Some Yanks went out advising down in Southern Vietnam  
While countering Ho's insurgency they encountered the Madame  
It was frequently confusing in the land where plastic flies  
Just which ones were the VC, and whom should they advise.

Chieu hoi! Chi Yi (pronounced like by)  
Ghost advisors bye and bye.

They built strategic hamlets and they gave out USOM aid.  
They convinced the Montagnards that they really had it made.  
They defoliated jungles and they pulled up VC rice.  
They swatted the mosquitoes and they searched for body lice.

Chieu Hoi! Chi Yi!  
Ghost advisors bye and bye

## THE YELLOW ROSE OF SAIGON (Pre-Coup)

She's the Yellow Rose of Saigon  
And I think she banned the twist  
But she's a real cute little dolly  
She's one I think I've missed  
You can talk about the President  
And about his brother Nhu  
But don't talk about my Yellow Rose  
If you know what's good for you.

She's angry at the Buddhists  
And she hates the New York Times  
Because they always rib her  
And accuse her of some crimes  
What's a little joke about cook-outs  
Or imported gasoline  
Why, that's real exaggeration  
She's really not that mean.

Yes my little Rose of Saigon  
Is just a refugee  
She fled down from Hanoi  
To make jobs for you and me  
She's snowed old Maxwell Taylor  
and Ambassador Nolting too  
Now JFK's her buddy  
And gives her money too!

So my Yellow Rose of Saigon  
Stays off of Tu Do street  
She doesn't go for loving  
But at intrigue she can't be beat  
I look for many changes  
When she meets with Mr. Lodge  
Cause it's said that he's a sucker  
For eastern camouflage

Yes my Little Rose of Saigon  
Is a veteran through and through  
She's careful with her money  
In case there is a Coup  
She's bound to salvage something  
For all her enterprise  
Before the VC lose their fight  
Or America gets wise.

Now my Yellow Rose of Saigon  
Is in the USA  
To be a UN member  
In the good old fashion way  
You can talk about the President  
And about her husband Nhu  
But don't talk about my Yellow Rose  
If you know what's good for you.

#### STRATEGIC HAMLET SONG

Give me wire, lots of wire, under starry skies above,  
please fence me in.  
Wrap it round, wrap it round, wrap it all the way around,  
please fence me in.  
I've got the house and the fields, and the pump protected,  
felt secure till the CG defected!  
Give me more aid and I'll feel protected,  
please fence me in!  
Give me lemonade, bandaid, USOM aid, any U.S. aid.  
I asked for fertilizer, pig pens, bulgar wheat, and  
haven't got it yet.  
So I'll bark at the moon til they burn my fences.  
Stay in my hamlet till I lose my senses.  
Bury my shotgun cause I've got no defences,  
please fence me in!

THE STREETS OF SAIGON  
(Coup-Time)

As I walked down the Streets of Saigon  
As I walked down Le Loi one day  
I spied an ex-president all dressed in white linen  
All wrapped in white linen and cold as the clay.

"I can see by your uniform you're an advisor."  
These words he said as I slowly walked by.  
"Come sit down beside me and hear my sad story,  
I'm shot in the head and I'm sure to die.

"It was once I ruled wisely, once I ruled strongly  
And loved my sister or so they did say  
But I kept my brother and so I ruled wrongly  
For the Buddhists gone burning I know I must pay.

"Have sixteen dancers to carry my coffin  
Have the girls down at Tu Do sing a love song  
Take me down Xa Loi, there lay the sod over me  
Now that USIS has scorned me, I know I've done wrong.

"Oh blow the pipes slowly and beat the drum loudly  
Play a slow twist as you carry my pall  
Put Dalat roses all over my coffin  
To soften the tears of the press as they fall."

I'VE STAYED TOO LONG  
(Tune: I Wonder Why)

We don't need MAAG advisors  
We just take tranquilizers  
We've been here long enough to know.

We don't need supervisors  
We don't need fertilizers  
We just need to go from here.

We can really hardly wait  
To get through that airport gate  
We're not chicken, we're all through.

I hear VC, but there's no one there  
I find leaflets underneath my chair  
I've got hash marks on my underwear  
I've stayed too long, I've stayed too long.

I count hamlets in my dreams at night  
Too much nuouc mam's spoiled my appetite  
I'm just one great big mosquito bite  
I guess I've lost the fight, I've stayed too long.

## MACV FIGHT SONG

Fight on for COMUSMACV  
He'll lead us to victory  
Send the ARVN out to fight  
WE'll stay in Saigon and see the sight  
For we are advisors and never fear  
All our advice falls on little ears  
And the Viets fight on and on  
Worried that we may go it alone  
So fight on for COMUSMACV  
We'll going to win in '73  
Johnson'll send us more and more  
Elections will help us to shorten the war

## LET'S DO IT

(Saigon Version 1964, end Jan)

Who did it? Dinh did it.  
Only others seem to think that Minh did it.  
Let's do it, let's have a coup.

The word is out General Khanh did it.  
(Wouldn't it be fun if Brother Can did it?)  
Let's do it, let's have a coup!

Marines from way up in Hue do it,  
No need for Nhus, they just ngo-  
Tanks, they tell us, too, do it -  
Tanks a lot from My tho.

They say that Kim did it,  
Don did it,  
Certain factions seem to feel that Dung done did it -  
Let's do it, let's have a coup.

## SORRY ABOUT THAT

You're working very hard at MACV  
18 hours a day  
For three months you've been on a project  
With no extra pay  
You finally turn it in in time  
To hear the General say  
The projects cancelled, we don't need it  
Throw that junk away!

- Chorus - Sorry about that!

You're transferred into the Delta  
Hamlets to defend  
You reinforce your garrison  
For fight to the bitter end  
J2 has said VC will attack tonight your town  
Instead by dang they hit Nha Trang  
And burn it to the ground.

- Chorus - Sorry about that!

Next day you're patrolling  
When a land mine lays you low  
A Huey takes to to Saigon  
Your leg wound up to sew  
They wheel you into surgery  
And of this there is no doubt  
The dirty carts mixed up the charts  
They took your appendix out.

- Chorus - Sorry about that!

And then your year is ended  
Your replacement's here and trained  
You're out at Tan Son Nhut  
With suitcase finally to emplane  
You're headed up the stair-way  
When the MP's come for you  
To say your tour's just been extended  
From one year to two.

- Chorus - Sorry about that!

## Those Viet Cong Are Breaking Up that Old Gang of Mine

Not a soul down in the hamlet,  
That's a pretty certain sign,  
Those Viet Cong are breaking up that old gang of mine.

All the boys are selling weapons,  
Ho's piastres do just fine,  
Those Viet Cong are breaking up that old gang of mine.

There goes Nhu, there goes Diem,  
They were not so tame!  
There goes Don, there goes Dinh,  
Things won't be the same!

Oh, I get that shaky feeling when I hear those mortars  
"chime"  
Those Viet Cong are breaking up that old gang of mine.

We Gotta Have Khanh (You Gotta Have Hope)

We gotta have Khanh  
Months and months and months of Khanh  
When the press were saying we'd never win,  
That's when the guy stepped in.

We gotta have Lodge  
Please stay with us, Mr. Lodge  
Though New Hampshire says he better go back,  
Saigon would feel the lack.

When the odds are saying zero,  
Keep your goatee in the air.  
Mister you can be a hero,  
There's success in every hair  
There's nothing to it but to do it--  
We gotta have Khanh,  
Maybe even years of Khanh,  
Even though some think he should shave his chin,  
We know that our man will win  
So we gotta have Khanh-- and Mr. Lodge.

## MACV FIGHT SONG II

(Windsock Tune)

Buckle down, Westmoreland, buckle down  
You'll win, Max Taylor, if Westy buckles down  
You're both stars a plenty  
At less than three and twenty  
You'll win, Max - Westy, if you'll only buckle down!

## MACV MARCHING SONG

Oh, mine eyes have seen the glory  
    Of the Montagnards at play  
I have seen Strategic Hamlets  
    In every sort of way  
And have battled the mosquitoes  
    And every kinda bug  
And with the VC girlies  
    I've exchanged a dozen hugs

Glory, Glory I'm at MACV  
Glory, Glory I'm at MACV  
Glory, Glory I'm at MACV  
What a hell of a place to be!

Oh I've seen the troops of MACV  
    At work and at their play  
I have seen them down at Caman  
    And in the hills of Hue  
And to their counterparts  
    I have often heard them say  
Let's get on with this war  
    So I can get away!

TWAS COUP DAY  
(Cour - Time)

'Twas Siesta on "Coup" day  
And all thru Saigon  
Not a soldier was stirring  
Not even big Don  
The plans were all checked  
By Minh with great care  
In hopes that a victory  
They soon would declare  
The Nhu's were all nestled  
So snug in their beds  
While visions of power  
Danced thru their heads  
With Diem in his nightshirt  
And Nhu in his cap  
Both settled down  
For a hot sweaty nap  
When out on the roof  
There arose such a clatter  
Diem rose from his bed  
To see what was the matter  
Then what to his wondering eyes did appear  
But 30's and 50's inspiring such fear  
(Cause they were all shooting not there but here)  
The tanks and the how's and the planes

How they came

He started to think 'How short-lived is fame!  
Then all of a sudden his phone gave a jingle  
(This happened quite often since he was still single)  
"Give up and live or resist and die,  
We'll give you till six to say no or aye"  
He picked up his pants, down the staircase he flew  
If I hadn't listened to dear Madame Nhu  
I'd still have control instead of the "Coup"  
But now that it's here, I'd better get brother  
To come up with crack troops and put down another  
Attempt to take over the reigns of this realm  
And let me get back to steering the helm  
So putting his fingers up to his nose  
He gave them the sign that everyone knows  
And moving the bookcase so grand and so tall  
Uncovered a doorway into a hall.  
This passage was secret-not even Nhu knew  
That this was 'built in' for just such a 'Coup'  
It led to an alley outside of the grounds  
To a spot that was in back of those loud banging sounds.  
"We made it", cried Nhu with a voice loud and clear  
But Diem stated wisely "We are still too near"  
So let's take that vehicle parked over there  
I once drove an APC (It was a dare)"  
They captured the driver and vehicle intact  
And moved it out smartly (the vehicle was tracked)  
Over the river and away from the 'coup',

Dash away dash away dash away Nhu  
And all you could hear as they drove out of sight  
Was 'Merci Beaucoup', Don't shoot all night  
  
The next day we heard so few of the facts  
The rumors were flying about many pacts  
  
But one thing we feel is essentially true  
Some old is preserved, but there ain't no more Nhu.

DON'T TAKE MY COUNTERPART AWAY  
(You are My Sunshine)

In South East Asia, Here in Vietnam.  
There is a missunderstood war.  
Some say insurgent, some psychologic  
Please don't take my counterpart away!

Down in the delta, we have the VC, who come  
here from the North of Hue  
Some say guerilla, some next door neighbor  
Please don't take my counterpart away!

Chorus

The other night dear, out in the Hamlet  
I dreamed I held you in my arms  
When I awoke dear it was the VC  
So I shot him down and I cried.

Chorus

The high triumphant includes Westmoreland  
with Throckmorton and Dick Stilwell  
They'll have the VC backed into China  
Just don't take their counterparts away!